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"De Imitatione Christi."

A Review of "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis,*
with an Historical Introduction on Scholasticism, Mysticism,
and the Brethren of the Common Life.

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Of the book *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis, Kurtz, the church historian, says: "With the exception of the Bible perhaps no other work has so frequently been reprinted or translated into so many languages, nor has any other been perused by so many persons of all ranks and creeds." Up to the year 1900 three thousand editions had been printed. The printing of a new edition a few months ago by the Macmillan Company — this edition bearing the *nihil obstat* and the *imprimatur* of Roman Catholic censorship — has given the incentive to this article. It seems strange that a religious book having the approval of the Roman Catholic Church has been widely circulated among, and studiously read also by, a large number of Protestants.

Thomas à Kempis was a member of the Brethren of the Common Life. As soon as we know the relation of this order to Mysticism and the relation of Mysticism to Scholasticism, we shall know the reason why Thomas à Kempis wrote his book *De Imitatione Christi* and shall understand the religious element in it which has merited the approval of the Roman Catholic Church and which also, from a somewhat different viewpoint, has appealed to a large number of Protestants. A few introductory historical notes will therefore help us in our judgment.

Scholasticism was an attempt made during the Middle Ages, from Anselm to Aquinas, to rationalize Christianity or, in other words, to justify the existing church doctrines by reason, especially by the reasoning process of Aristotelian philosophy. The method

* *The Imitation of Christ*. By Thomas à Kempis. Edited with introduction and notes by Brother Leo, F. C. S., Professor of English Literature in St. Mary's College, Oakland, Cal. 353 pages. \$1.00. (The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y.)

was something like this: the *material* was furnished by the sentences of the Church Fathers, the dogmas, the canons of the councils, the decrees of Popes, etc.; the *conclusion* was confirmed by quotations from the Fathers, *Aristotle*, and the Bible, the Bible being subordinated to the other two. Scholasticism was rationalism. The fact that some Scholastics, such as Anselm, put faith first and then reason (*non intelligo ut credam, sed credo ut intelligam*), and that others, like Abelard, put reason first and then faith (*non credendum, nisi prius intellectum*), finally led to the same result. All applied the same rule to the reading of the Bible which Abelard, in his book *Sic et Non*, desired to have applied to the reading of the Church Fathers, namely, that they should not be read *cum credendi necessitate, sed cum judicandi libertate, i. e., critically*.

Rationalists never have agreed. Of course not; for if the human mind is to decide what is to be believed, then there will be as many different religious systems as there are different minds. Neither did the rationalistic Scholastics of the Middle Ages agree. The somewhat Biblical doctrine of the atonement taught by Anselm in his book *Cur Deus Homo?* was rejected by Abelard's *moral influence theory* of the atonement, for Abelard denied the vicarious atonement and taught that the incarnation and death of Christ are the highest expression of God's love to the sinner, which, in turn, should have the effect of awakening love to God in man. And this doctrine differed again from that of Duns Scotus, who taught the so-called *acceptilation theory*, teaching that Christ rendered only partial payment, but that God accepted this partial payment as an equivalent of the entire debt which the sinner owes God. The teachings of Scholasticism were finally crystallized by Thomas Aquinas into a definite system, which became the approved doctrinal system of the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages and, in all its essentials, is still its dogmatic system to-day. In this system two things which exclude each other, namely, grace and merit, are the two dominating conceptions and are, without reconciliation, permitted to stand side by side.

This rationalistic theology of the Middle Ages could not create a virile Christianity, no more than rationalistic systems of theology could do so at any time in the history of the Church, from those of the ancient period of church history down to those of the modern theology of the present time. Whenever the apparent failure of such a rationalistic system made itself sorely felt, a *reaction* followed. Mysticism was such a reaction against Scholasticism.

When things went from bad to worse in the Church and it was found that there was largely only a mere outward formalism, while the real inward piety of the heart was neglected, the Mystics sought to reestablish the latter. Their method of doing so, however, was wrong, because, after all, they sought in their way to bring about a regeneration of the human heart without understanding that the justification of the sinner by God through Christ must be the basis of such a regeneration. Mysticism put feeling above knowledge; it was given to mental introversion and neglected the written revelation; it stressed holiness of life, but failed to show its source and therefore directed man to his own works for his salvation; it spoke of Jesus *in us*, but little of Jesus *for us*. After all, Mysticism did not entirely break away from Scholasticism and from the Roman Catholic theology of the Middle Ages. An effort was made to reform the life of man without establishing for such reformation the proper basis, namely, that man be set right with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

As a result of Mysticism — its flourishing period was from 1400 to 1500 — such societies were formed as "The Brethren of the Common Life." These "brethren" lived essentially a monastic life, without, however, taking the monastic vows. Some of the brethren devoted themselves to preaching, visiting the sick, copying and circulating books, and educating the youth, while others were employed in manual labor and in the mechanical arts. Thomas à Kempis was a member of the order of the Brethren of the Common Life. He was born in 1379, a son of John Haemmerken (little hammer), in the town of Kempen. Later Thomas Haemmerken of Kempen was only known as Thomas à Kempis (Thomas of the town of Kempen). In 1399 Thomas entered the monastery of Mount St. Agnes near Zwolle, where he spent seventy-one years of his life, knowing "no world but that within the monastery walls." The best-known work of Thomas à Kempis is his *De Imitatione Christi*. It has four chapters: Admonitions Useful for a Spiritual Life, Admonitions Concerning the Interior Life, Concerning the Holy Communion, Of Interior Consolation.

In the new edition, which just left the press a few months ago, the editor says: "The earliest English version was made by Wylliam Atkynson and printed by Wykyns de Worde in 1502. A translation of notable interest is that by Edward Hake, which appeared in 1567. Of the numerous English versions appearing in recent years many are defective owing to the unpardonable omission of the Third Book and the merciless mutilation of the text. Among

the best English editions are those of Sir Francis Cruise, Canon Benham, Bishop Challoner, and the Oxford edition of 1841."

We have carefully examined the present edition, but have not compared it with the original. From a literary point of view the translation by Brother Leo makes good English reading. In the preface he says: "This edition of *The Imitation of Christ* has been prepared from an educational rather than a devotional viewpoint. The text is the result of research, analysis, comparison, and reflection and has been adapted with a view to its use in high school and academic classes. The aim of the editor has been to suggest an archaic flavor in the style, without, at the same time, making too great a demand on the reading vocabulary of the students."

In the introduction, covering about forty pages, Brother Leo has a chapter on the "sources" from which à Kempis took his material. From this introduction we quote the following: "Study *The Imitation*," writes Sir Francis Cruise, 'and it is impossible not to realize that, first of all and above all, it is saturated throughout with the Sacred Scriptures. No one can read many sentences in it which do not recall passages in the Old and the New Testament. It reflects them as a mirror, applying them with unmatched deftness to meet the wants and soul-yearnings of poor humanity. Be the quotations direct or paraphrastic, there they are at every step. All this is evident to those who know the Bible well.' According to Dr. Pohl, unquestionably the most distinguished Kempist scholar of our time, *The Imitation* contains more than eleven hundred quotations from the Bible, most of them being taken bodily from the Latin Vulgate. In many cases, however, Thomas à Kempis embodies the quotation in a brief explanation of its meaning, in the form of a paraphrase. . . . It is questionable if he read Greek, but at all events he must have happened upon Aristotle either in the original or in a Latin translation, for *The Imitation* shows unmistakably the influence of the Greek philosopher upon whose method of thought the Schoolmen raised the imposing structure of scholastic philosophy. . . . Besides being a devout and sedulous student of the Holy Scriptures, Thomas à Kempis was an assiduous reader of the Fathers of the Christian Church, whose writings were rated among the most precious of the manuscripts treasured in the Mount St. Agnes Monastery. Scholars have found in *The Imitation* passages that indicate the influence of St. Jerome, St. Gregory the Great, St. Bonaventura, and St. Thomas Aquinas, the most noted exponent of the scholastic philosophy. The influence of the last-named writer deserves special emphasis. An

opinion current among many critics is that à Kempis wrote *The Imitation* in a mood of revolt against the philosophy of the Schoolmen, and that he shows but scanty regard for the much-misunderstood system of thought. While it is undeniably true that à Kempis, with the impatience born of directness and practicality of mind, had little regard for what was ultraformal and recondite in the scholastic system, he nevertheless recognized in the theology of the Angelic Doctor, as Thomas of Aquin was called, the most consistent presentation of the rational basis of Catholic dogma and morals. While the author of *The Imitation*, intent upon conversion of the heart and growth in holiness, cried out, "What have we to do with genera and species?" he does not fail, when occasion arises, to pay to the scholastic system the tribute of his esteem. The backbone of the Third Book, as has been frequently pointed out, is the system of St. Thomas. *The Imitation of Christ* does not, then, stand for a reaction against the philosophy of the Schoolmen; it is from one point of view a protest against the wasteful and ridiculous excess of controversy and discussion to which that system of thought was carried by many of its fourteenth century devotees. A' Kempis, it must be remembered, was pre-eminently of a practical turn of mind, and he had a pious horror of the fine-spun and purely theoretical and speculative arguments which characterized Scholasticism in certain of its ramifications."

A few samples of *The Imitation of Christ*, taken from the English translation by Brother Leo, are herewith given:—

"Of the Imitation of Christ and Contempt of All Worldly Vanities.

"1. He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, saith the Lord. These are the words of Christ, by which we are taught to imitate His life and manners if we would be truly enlightened and be delivered from all blindness of heart. Let therefore our chief study be to meditate upon the life of Jesus Christ.

"2. The doctrine of Christ surpasseth all the doctrines of holy men, and he that hath His Spirit will find therein a hidden manna.

"But many, albeit they often hear the Gospel of Christ, are yet but little affected because they have not the Spirit of Christ.

"Whosoever, then, would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ must endeavor to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ.

"3. What will it avail thee to be engaged in profound discussions concerning the Trinity if thou be void of humility and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity?

"Truly, sublime words do not make a man holy and just; but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God.

"I had rather feel compunction than know how to define it.

"If thou knewest the whole Bible by heart and the sayings of all

the philosophers, what would it profit thee without the love of God and without grace?

"Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, except to love God and Him only to serve.

"This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the kingdom of heaven.

"4. It is therefore vanity to seek after perishable riches and to trust in them.

"It is also vanity to strive after honors and to climb to high degree.

"It is vanity to follow the lusts of the flesh and to desire that for which thou must afterwards suffer grievous punishment.

"It is vanity to wish to live long and not to care to live well.

"It is vanity to mind only this present life and not to make provision for those things which are to come.

"It is vanity to love that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither where everlasting joy abideth.

"5. Call often to mind that proverb: The eye is not satisfied with seeing nor the ear filled with hearing.

"Endeavor therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of visible things and to turn thyself to the invisible.

"For they that follow their evil passions stain their own consciences and lose the grace of God." (Book One, chapter I.)

In this chapter Thomas asks that men follow Christ, but he fails to tell them *how* they may be able to do so. He stresses sanctification without directing the sinner to the doctrine of justification. *This is characteristic of the entire book.*

In his *meditation on death* we ought certainly to expect to find that Thomas tells the sinner to prepare to meet his God by accepting in true childlike faith the forgiveness of sins which is in Christ Jesus. But we find nothing of the kind. Instead, Thomas gives this direction: "A perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to go forward in all virtue, a love of discipline, a laborious repentance, a ready obedience, a denying of ourselves, and an endurance of any affliction whatsoever for the love of God will give us great confidence that we shall die happily." The sinner is directed to his own works, and not to Christ, the Savior, whose blood cleanses us from all sin.

Another sample: —

"Of the Oblation of Christ on the Cross and of Self-Resignation.

"THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED.

"1. Of My own will did I offer up Myself unto God the Father for thy sins. My hands were stretched forth on the cross and My body laid bare, so that nothing remained in Me that was not wholly turned into a sacrifice for the appeasing of the divine Majesty.

"In like manner oughtest thou also to offer thyself willingly unto Me

daily in the Mass as a pure and holy oblation, with all thy strength and affections, as intimately as thou canst.

"What do I require of thee more than that thou study to resign thyself entirely to Me?

"Whatsoever thou givest besides thyself is of no value in My sight, for I seek not thy gifts, but thee.

"2. As it would not suffice thee to have all things whatsoever without Me, so neither can it please Me whatsoever thou givest, if thou give not thyself.

"Offer up thyself unto Me and give thyself wholly to God, and thine offering shall be acceptable.

"Behold, I offered up Myself wholly unto My Father for thee and gave My whole body and blood for thy food that I might be wholly thine and that thou mightest continue Mine to the end.

"But if thou abide in self and do not offer thyself up freely unto My will, thine oblation is not entire, and there will be no perfect union between us.

"Therefore a free offering of thyself unto the hands of God ought to go before all thine actions if thou desire to obtain liberty and grace.

"For this cause so few become inwardly free and enlightened, because they are loath wholly to deny themselves.

"My sentence standeth sure: Unless a man renounce all, he cannot be My disciple. If thou therefore desire to be My disciple, offer up thyself unto Me with thy whole heart." (Book Three, chapter VIII.)

In the opening words of this chapter Thomas says that Christ offered Himself for the sins of the world, but he then fails to give the sinner the comfort that by faith this offering of Christ is made the sinner's own; he rather directs the sinner to seek God's favor by offering himself daily in the Mass and by wholly denying himself. While it is true that the Christian should practise self-denial and present his body as a living sacrifice to God, yet this can be done only *as a result of faith*; and it should be done *for the purpose of giving evidence of his faith and not for the purpose of thereby meriting his salvation*.

Another sample from Book Two, chapter VIII:—

Familiar Friendship with Jesus!

"What can the world profit thee without Jesus?

"To be without Jesus is a grievous hell; to be with Jesus, a sweet paradise.

"If Jesus be with thee, no enemy shall be able to hurt thee.

"He that findeth Jesus findeth a good treasure, yea, a good above all good.

"And he that loseth Jesus loseth overmuch, yea, more than the whole world.

"Most poor is he who liveth without Jesus; and he is most rich who is dear to Jesus.

"It asketh great skill to know how to hold converse with Jesus, and to know how to keep Jesus is great wisdom.

"Be thou humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee.

"Be devout and quiet, and Jesus will stay with thee.

"Thou mayest soon drive away Jesus and lose His favor if thou wilt turn aside to outward things.

"And if thou shouldst drive Him from thee and lose Him, unto whom wilt thou flee, and whom wilt thou then seek for thy friend?

"Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus be not above all friends to thee, thou shalt be indeed sad and desolate.

"Therefore thou doest not wisely if thou trust or rejoice in any other.

"It is preferable to have all the world against thee rather than to have Jesus offended with thee.

"Amongst all that be dear unto thee let Jesus alone be specially beloved."

While all that is said in these words is true, yet neither before nor after does Thomas clearly state *how the sinner can come to Jesus*. Such clear Bible statements as the following are not found anywhere in *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis: "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast," Eph. 2, 8, and: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John 3, 36. Thomas à Kempis was under the influence of the theology of his time, namely, that of Thomas Aquinas and of the Roman Catholic Church, and that theology did not emphasize salvation by the free grace of God through Christ the Savior, but obscured such salvation by directing the sinner to his own good works. Thomas à Kempis speaks much of Christ as our Example, but only in a passing way — and that not very often — of Christ who died for us.

Why has *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis appealed to so many Protestants and found a wide circulation among them? We answer: —

First: Because the references to specific Roman Catholic doctrines, such as the Mass, purgatory, calling upon the saints, etc., is not made an outstanding feature of the book, and therefore the average Protestant reader does not readily recognize that the book has been, after all, written from a Roman Catholic viewpoint.

Secondly: The book is filled with many Bible references, which, of course, appeal to the Christian.

Thirdly: Many of the sayings of Thomas à Kempis are true in themselves and could well stand if the proper basis for them were not missing, or, expressed in other words, if they had been

put in proper relation to the central doctrine of the Christian religion — justification by faith.

Fourthly: The sincerity and the singleness of heart of the author is so apparent that one is inclined to give him more credit than he deserves.

Fifthly: The admonitions to a holy life always appeal to the Christian.

Sixthly: There is no doubt that many Protestant readers will, by presupposing it, supply what is missing in the book and therefore understand what they read in the light of their own better Christian knowledge.

After all, *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis makes man's own piety, and not the grace of God in Christ Jesus, the determining factor in man's salvation. From Thomas à Kempis one cannot learn the true conception of Biblical Christianity.

St. John's Church in Catawba Co., N. C., One Hundred and Twenty-Five Years Old.

CARROLL O. SMITH, Conover, N. C.

I. Its Founding.

It may be a surprise to many of the members of the Missouri Synod to know that we have within our Synod at least one congregation which is almost fifty years older than Synod itself. The congregation which bears this distinction is situated in Catawba County, N. C., about three miles from Conover, the home of our Concordia College of the Southeast. It is St. John's congregation, which celebrated its one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary on the first Sunday in June of last year.

Unfortunately the records of the founding and of the early activities of this congregation have been lost, if, indeed, any were systematically kept. The only record that has escaped the ravages of time is the deed for the land, about six acres, upon which the church stands. This deed was executed in 1799 by one Henry "Bobe" (Pope), who had obtained the land by king's patent from Governor William Tryon, who became Governor of North Carolina April 3, 1765. What more we know, or think we know, about the early life of this congregation has been learned by a study of secular and Lutheran history of North Carolina, supplemented by local tradition.

Some of the crude inscriptions on the roughly polished stones standing at the earlier graves in the cemetery on the west side of the church are in the German language. The first records of the North Carolina Synod, the first synod to which this congregation belonged, were made in the same language. Perhaps at the time of the formation of the North Carolina Synod the pastors of St. John's used the German language exclusively. Some few descendants of old families who were members of St. John's still speak a few words or even sentences of German; and they remember that their fathers and mothers and the old people who came to visit them spoke German — in some instances better than they spoke English. But when we begin to investigate, we find that the German spoken by these people was the so-called Pennsylvania German, although the early proceedings of the North Carolina Synod and, later, of the Tennessee Synod were recorded in High German.

Therefore, in order to get more information about the formation and organization of this congregation, we shall have to turn to the early German immigrants who settled in the "province" of North Carolina — immigrating from Pennsylvania, for the most part, to this western, or Piedmont, section of the State.

According to history, "the first German that set foot upon the soil of Carolina was John Lederer, who was sent on three different expeditions by Sir William Berkeley, Governor of the Colony of Virginia, to explore lands lying south and west of the James River, during the years of 1669 and 1670." His journal, written in Latin, and the map of his explorations, displaying a knowledge of geographical calculations which must be called remarkable when we consider the disadvantages of those times and the difficulties under which he had to labor, proclaim Lederer to have been a man of learning. According to his journal, Lederer started on his last trip of exploration on "the 20th of May, 1670," accompanied by "one Major Harris . . . with twenty Christian horse and five Indians." After some months of wandering through trackless forests and rugged mountains, Major Harris and the "twenty Christian horse" decided to go back home. Lederer went on alone. After having crossed the State of North Carolina and penetrated into the State of South Carolina and after having had several narrow escapes at the hands of the Indians, he finally returned to Virginia to find himself out of favor with Governor Berkeley on account of the activities of Major Harris, who had represented to the people "that the public taxes of that year had

all been expended in his wanderings." He was insulted and reproached in such a manner in Virginia that he finally went to New Jersey. The governor, Sir William Talbert, although at first prejudiced against him, gave him a respectful hearing, translated his journal from Latin into English, and published it. This journal at once began to tell its story to the people of Maryland, and soon it crossed into Pennsylvania to tell the same story to many Germans living there.

Ten years later, in 1680, the stream of German emigration from Pennsylvania began to flow. Land could not be obtained in Pennsylvania without much difficulty; for the proprietors of that province purchased the soil by small parcels from the natives, and those lands were soon taken up." (Williamson's *Hist. of N. C.*, Vol. II, p. 71.) On the other hand, the same authority informs us that "Lord Carteret's land in Carolina, where the soil was cheap, presented a tempting residence to people of every denomination." Consequently, many of the Germans of Pennsylvania, having piled into their capacious wagons every possible article for house and farm use, set out for this "Province of North Carolina." By way of the Cumberland and Shenandoah valleys, over the Blue Ridge Mountains, through almost trackless forests, across unbridged streams, by easy stages, they moved on toward the land of promise, with women and children riding in the wagons on top of bedding and men walking and driving cows, sheep, and hogs before them. They usually "left home in the fall season, after all the harvesting was over and the proceeds of the year's labor could be disposed of; they arrived at their places of settlement just before the commencement of the winter season. The first arrival of the pioneer train may have occurred about the year 1745, but the large body of these German colonists did not commence to settle in North Carolina until about the year 1750; this may be gathered partly from tradition, partly from old family records in their German Bibles, but mostly from the title-deeds of their lands." (Bernheim, *German Settlements and the Lutheran Church in the Carolinas*, p. 153.) "As they were all agriculturists, they generally avoided settling themselves in towns; uninformed in the ways of the world, ignorant of the English language, and unacquainted with the shrewdness necessary for merchandising, yet well informed in their own language and well read in their Bibles and other devotional German books, they remained at their country homes . . .; hence very few Lutheran and German Reformed churches were erected in the towns of North

Carolina at that early day; and when, in process of time, it did become necessary to build churches in the villages and towns of the State, it was found exceedingly difficult to get the members from the country to become accustomed to the new arrangement." (*L. c.*, p. 153 f.)

Owing to the fact that these colonists did not migrate in large bands and avoided group settlements when they arrived, they were in no position to organize congregations and build churches. This fact, together with the influence of their past relations with the German Reformed Church, both in Pennsylvania and, to some extent, in the Fatherland, moved them, in many, if not most, instances, to build union churches. This is what happened at St. John's. The deed of 1799 was made to the Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians. The German Reformed are not mentioned in the deed. As far back as the memories of old members go and old meager records show, the Episcopalians and Presbyterians never had a congregation, nor did they ever hold a service at this church; and they do not claim any rights there now. But the German Reformed helped to build both the original log church and the present new brick church. They still hold one-fourth interest in the building and are entitled to one Sunday in each month for their services, although they have become so weak that for the last years they do not use the Sunday to which they are entitled. Some argue that when the deed mentions the "Presbyterians," the German Reformed are meant, a confusion of names having come about by the similarity of doctrines of these two denominations. The mention of the Episcopalians in the deed is readily accounted for by the fact that at that time North Carolina was a royal province and the Episcopal Church was the state church of England, and by the further fact that the Episcopalians, just at this time, were making a systematic attempt to get possession of the Lutheran people and their churches here in the South.

Another thing which to a large extent may account for the confusion of things in religious matters by these early settlers in North Carolina is the fact that there were no pastors among them. These people made the same sad mistake which our Lutheran people are still making in only too many instances — they moved to a place where they thought that they would be able to better their financial condition, but forgot to consider whether they and their children and their children's children would fare better in a religious way. In fact, pastors were scarce in America. It was then as it is now: men were loath to leave their homes of comfort

and refinement, cross a vast ocean, and labor at places where, in order to feed these children of God with the Bread of Life and hold them to the one true faith, they would have to suffer isolation and privation amidst imminent dangers and hardships. So the blame for these things must not be placed on the shoulders of the laymen — as all the blame must not be placed on the shoulders of the laity for conditions as they exist now as a result of those former conditions. The fields were white already to harvest, but the laborers were few.

As far as records are extant, the first pastor to come Catawba County, North Carolina, where St. John's is situated, was the Rev. Johann Gottfried Arndt, who arrived there in 1787. The account of his coming runs about thus: In the year 1772 Christopher Lyerly, of Cabarrus County, and Christopher Rendleman of Rowan County, made a trip to Germany at their own expense to get a minister or ministers for the work in North Carolina. They applied to the Consistory of Hannover, because the Province of North Carolina was under the government of the King of England, who at that time was Elector of Hannover. These men returned in the fall of 1773, accompanied by the Rev. Adolph Nussmann, a converted Roman Catholic monk of the Franciscan Order, to be their pastor, and Mr. Johann Gottfried Arndt, to be their parochial school teacher. After teaching for two years, Arndt was ordained by Rev. Joachim Buelow, who signed himself "Missionary and Inspector of South and North Carolina," but of whom nothing else is known. The Rev. Arndt then became pastor of Organ Church, in Rowan County, which he served for eleven years. In 1787 he moved to what is now Catawba County and, in all probability, became the founder of St. John's Church. At least an authority says that he became "the acknowledged founder of the Lutheran Church west of the Catawba River." The oldest Lutheran churches in Catawba County "west of the Catawba River" are St. John's, northeast of Conover, and St. Paul's, southwest of, and nearer to, Conover. Therefore it seems to be proved without doubt that the Rev. Arndt organized this congregation, but just when he began to preach there and organized the congregation are matters of conjecture. There evidently was an organized congregation there when the deed was made, because the title was made to the "elders and their successors in office." Therefore we know that the congregation is now at least one hundred and twenty-five years old. What a mercy of God that His grace has continued an unbroken stream for one and a quarter centuries upon this

congregation! How many of the souls that once bowed in reverence before this altar are now, or yet shall be, casting their crowns before the great white throne and singing the songs of those eternally redeemed by the Lamb! How many who saw Him here with the eyes of faith have had their hope converted into fruition and now are beholding, or shall behold, Him face to face whom to see is life eternal!

(To be continued.)

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

The message of the new Governor of Colorado, which calls upon the Legislature to pass an amendment to the prohibition enforcement laws of the State forbidding the use of wine for sacramental purposes, is an ominous utterance, indicating to what extreme fanatical prohibitionists are determined to go. If this law is passed, the dilution of thousands of citizens of Colorado is put out of commission at least one point, and that a very important one. For wine is the sacramental element appointed for the Eucharist, and no one has the right to substitute any other for it.

DAU.

His impressions of the Foreign Missions Convention of the United States and Canada at Washington, January 28 to February 2, the editor of the *Presbyterian* sums up thus: "The purpose and plan of the convention is most excellent, and its results are most hopeful, without any embarrassment. There are two antagonistic parties involved in it, which differ fundamentally as to the message and the object of missions. One of these parties holds the exclusive objects of missions to be salvation of souls, and the only method or instrumentality is the Gospel, as provided by the supernatural life and work of Jesus Christ. There are sequences of improved social or civil life, but these are results, not purposes. The other party makes social reconstruction and civilization the chief purpose and is either indifferent to, or negligent of, the object of soul salvation, with the consequence that the emphasis is put upon education in the human power and the use of all departments of art and science for the best earthly development of mankind. Until a closer agreement can be reached, all such conventions and efforts at cooperation and inspiration must be more or less embarrassed." For this reason much of the fine enthusiasm displayed by the 3,480 delegates to the convention and the 8,000 to 10,000 attendants at its sessions will prove a waste of time and energy, and the exhibits of the marvelous achievements of missionaries in all parts of the world are deceptive. "Can we walk together except they be agreed?" Amos 3, 3. The social basis in foreign mission work, moreover, is undesirable, not only from the Christian viewpoint, but also for political reasons. It is the herald of social uplift in the foreign mission field that has filled the rulers of pagan lands with the suspicion that these uplifters are real agents in religious disguise and propagandists for the imperialism of the great World Powers.

DAU.

A World Lutheran Missionary Convention?—A Philadelphia seminarian, writing in the *Lutheran* (February 19), "was impressed [at the World Missionary Convention] with the great and many things that Protestant denominations have in common in comparison with the things in which they differ. The Lutheran delegates in common felt the lack of unity as a denomination, let alone the characteristic aloofness of our Church in interdenominational activity. A suggestion was made at the Lutheran delegates' meeting that the Lutheran Church have a World Lutheran Missionary Convention, which was well received. Great things will come out of the Washington convention. If we cannot contribute to so great an affair, let us at least attribute what others have given us." Now, what might that be?—A World Lutheran Missionary Convention would labor under the same difficulties as the one that met at Washington and could never hope to achieve the *éclat* of the latter. But who cares for that? If a really united Lutheran Church were to take up in a Pan-Lutheran Convention the discussion of the needs of the heathen and the evangelical way to meet them, that would indeed be a great and glad event. DAU.

Freemasonry views itself as a kind of superreligion. Rudyard Kipling is reported thus in the *Scottish Rite Clip Service*, February 15: "I was secretary for some years of Lodge Hope and Perseverance No. 782 E. (Lahore English constitution), which included brethren of at least four creeds. I was entered by a member of Brahmo Somaj, a Hindu, passed by a Mohammedan, and raised by an Englishman. Our tiler was an Indian Jew. We met, of course, on the level, and the only difference any one would notice was that at our banquets some brethren, who were debarred by caste rules from eating food not ceremonially prepared, sat over empty plates." In Dr. Joseph Fort Newton's diary, now being published in the *Master Mason*, there is a record of a Masonic lodge-meeting attended by Hindus, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Parsees, Hebrews, Christians, Catholics, and various kinds of Protestants. At the close of the meeting a brother of each religion pronounced a word of blessing from the ritual of his own belief, and all the brethren united in the Lord's Prayer. Dr. Newton remarks: "About no altar on earth could such a group be gathered in mutual regard and good will. For three hours we talked in many tongues, in voices soft and sometimes tremulous, of the reality which underlies all races and all faiths, the basis of all and the blessing of each. Exclusiveness was excluded; we found that which makes us eternally one with one another." Evidently the caste people at Kipling's banquets still had a conscience about some things which they would not sacrifice. Caste is everything to the Hindu. They professed their religion by not eating. The other religionists, it seems, had nothing to confess. At Dr. Newton's meeting all beliefs were merged in the Lord's Prayer, but that did not mean that all suddenly became Christians, for even the Lord's Prayer was but one of many expressions of "the reality underlying all faiths," that nondescript something which wipes out all religious distinctions. This "underlying reality" must take in

Satan, according to Jas. 2, 19 and other evidences which Scripture gives of the extent of his religiousness. But James says that it is a reality that makes the devils tremble. There will be a rude awakening for all who think that they have the great, the real, the universal religion when they have the Masonic religion which is the essence of all and above all; for they will, on the basis of the "underlying reality," some day greet their Brother Belial. DAU.

On the Klan School Law in Oregon the editor of the *San José* (Cal.) *Evening News* (February 4) expresses the following views, which characterize the average thinking of the secular mind on this subject:—

"Governor Pierce of Oregon has filed in the Supreme Court of his State a brief defending the Oregon compulsory education law requiring all children between the ages of eight and sixteen to attend public school. A Catholic school and a private military school had secured an injunction restraining the State from enforcing this law, and Governor Pierce's brief is an effort to have this injunction set aside. The governor declares that, unless Oregon has the power to enforce the law 'it is hard to assign any limits to the injurious effect, from the standpoint of American patriotism.' He then advances some of the familiar Klan arguments: that, 'unless States have such rights, children may be taught that their true allegiance is to some other country than the United States; that the claims upon them of the religion to which they belong are superior to the claims of the United States,' and so on down the usual list. The Oregon law, in our opinion, is part of an effort to have Americanism made the official state religion of the people of this country and consequently violates the fundamental rule of the separation of Church and State. What good does it do to guarantee 'religious freedom' to people and at the same time to insist that they shall accept extreme Americanism, with its basic ritual of flag-saluting, as their official religion? Wherein does this differ from the ancient rule in the Old World that people should accept Catholicism, with its basic ritual of the Mass, as their official religion? The reason any Americans make such an attempt to violate religious liberty is because they as yet fail to realize that Americanism is actually a religion in the extreme form in which it is now being urged. There are many senses in which Catholics or Jews or Protestants have a perfect right to insist that 'the claims upon them of the religion to which they belong are superior to the claims of the United States.' Surely it is a far greater thing to be one of the children of the Most High than it is to be one of the citizens of the United States. If Governor Pierce denies this, if he insists that it is treason to contend this, then he must come right out with the admission that extreme Americanism is our official religion, that Church and State are *not* separated in this country, but are one and indivisible. But as a matter of fact, the real rub in this whole question is the Catholic religion, not any of the others. The dominant Protestant element in this country is on the rampage and is trying to persecute the Catholics. It does no good to argue that the Catholics would do the same if theirs were the dominant religion,

or that the Catholics in the past have persecuted Protestants; for just now it is the Protestants who are on top and who are trying to gouge the Catholics. The Catholics have a perfect right to maintain their parochial schools. It is wrong of the Protestants to endeavor to compound an official religion out of Protestantism and extreme jingoism and slip it over the Catholics in the public schools, pretending the while that the principles of religious liberty are not being violated. A faction of the Protestants has shown the same blind zeal in its agitation for Sunday legislation, overlooking the fact that Sunday legislation distinctly violates religious liberty. Catholics do not have the same attitude toward Sunday observance that Protestants have; Jews do not observe the same Sabbath; Adventists do not. Consequently, any Sunday legislation proceeding on the assumption that Sunday is a day that must inevitably be observed in certain ways is distinctly sectarian legislation, violating religious liberty. Advocates of compulsory non-Catholic education of the sort the Oregon law provides for are simple souls who do not understand that divided loyalties are inevitable. They are not only inevitable, but they are wholesome. Of course, patriotism and religion conflict at times; and it is well that they should. When a man who loves and reveres his mother gets married, he very soon finds that his loyalty to his wife and his loyalty to his mother occasionally come in conflict. His mother wishes him to do certain things, and his wife wishes him to do the opposite. It is a poor stick of a man indeed who thinks that he must immediately divorce his wife or quit being friendly with his mother because of such circumstances. If he is a man at all sensible or subtle, he will soon realize that such divided loyalties are an inevitable and a highly educative part of life's experience, and his soul will grow greater because of such inward conflicts. Now, there are fanatics who would have the soul owe no loyalty whatever save to the soul's mother, the Church; there are also fanatics who would have the soul owe no allegiance save to the soul's wife, America. It is the latter group of fanatics who are striving to put over legislation such as the Oregon law. They want life to be simple, crude, with one unreasoning ignorant loyalty in absolute possession of the soul, uneducated by conflict with other loyalties. This is not the direction in which a subtler and nobler civilization lies. We believe that the majority of Protestants in America are opposed to this narrow sectarian Americanism, and that they will, in the long run, defeat this tendency."

The editor's remarks about divided loyalty are not adequate. Men who have adopted the principle of separation of Church and State do not *divide*, but *separate*, their loyalty to either authority. In either case, however, their loyalty is whole-hearted. The lines of separation sometimes may be a little difficult to draw exactly, but when drawn, there is no trouble about when I must, or must not, obey either the Church or the State. "Divided loyalty" would be the proper case where a subject swears allegiance and promises submission *in the same matter* first to one and then to another power foreign to the first. This danger exists in Roman Catholicism. DAU.

The Philadelphia Seminary of the United Lutheran Church has an enrolment, at present, of 110 theological students. The *Seminary Bulletin* of December, 1924, reports the fact that the president of the seminary, the Rev. Dr. Henry E. Jacobs, celebrated his eightieth birthday on November 7, 1924. Dr. Jacobs is the editor of the Jacobs edition (English) of the *Book of Concord*. The same *Bulletin* also reports the sudden death of the Rev. Dr. Albert T. W. Steinhäuser on November 1, 1924. Dr. Steinhäuser was one of the joint editors of the Philadelphia edition of *Luther's Works* translated into English and was the translator of Prof. M. Reu's *Homiletics*. FRITZ.

The financial drive to raise \$15,000,000 for the completion of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Morningside Heights from all who live in New York, irrespective of their religious attitude, was justified by Bishop Manning on the ground that the cathedral would be "a house of prayer and worship for all the people of the city. All the strong currents of civic life flow into it and receive spiritual interpretation. It is the People's Church, the Strangers' Church, the City's Church." The drive has produced a number of surprises: 1. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., sent his check for half a million and expressed the hope that trustees of other Protestant denominations might help control the "People's Church." This suggestion was reasonable and fair, only it should not have limited the control of the cathedral to Protestants; for the Catholics Mayor Hylan, Governor Smith, and Charles Schwab, and the Jew Mortimer Schwab also contributed. Promptly the financially broad-minded Bishop Manning replied to Mr. Rockefeller that the time had not yet arrived for carrying out his suggestion. And now *Current Opinion* (March) says: "It is unfortunate that in his zeal to complete the great edifice on Morningside Heights Bishop Manning has laid his denomination open to a charge of unseemly presumption, if not even equivocation, in claiming for it a catholicity which, whatever its theological validity [*non est!*], does not square with the actual facts." 2. The same magazine questions the propriety of turning the management of the financial campaign over to a firm of professional money-raisers. "Whether a Church professing a spiritual ideal does not lose more than it gains by placing itself, so to speak, in the hands of money-changers, is at least an arguable question. The business man's first thought is to push the fund to the goal, and a Church should be too jealous of its honor to allow financial expediency the right of way." 3. The Catholic *America* "declares that aid given to the Cathedral is spiritually as mischievous as would be the physical ravages ensuing from the propagation of disease germs," for the Episcopalian doctrines are heretical. This last exception, as reported in *Current Opinion*, is the most surprising; for the correct thought underlying it is not lived up to by Catholics, who enlist the general public not only for support of their charitable enterprises, on the plea that they are working for the general welfare, but also for their churches, for instance, by great street-fairs with their questionable money-raising devices. Protestants should remember the *America's* plea the next time the Sisters from such-and-such Home, etc., call.

Business men, in particular, employees of the government, who are periodically levied upon by representatives of the Catholic Church, should have the moral courage to say that it is against their religious convictions to aid a heretical body. *Current Opinion* has succeeded in exposing the disingenuousness of the Episcopalians, but appears not to sense inconsistency in the *America's* plea. The latter paper does not come into court with clean hands.

DAU.

Dr. Eliot's List of Famous Men. — Recently Dr. Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University named ten men "who in his opinion have rendered the greatest service to education in the last two hundred years" and also the corresponding ten for the "two thousand three hundred years since the beginning of history." The first group comprises Adam Smith, Michael Faraday, John Stuart Mill, William Ellery Channing, Horace Mann, Herbert Spencer, Ernest Renan, Charles Robert Darwin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Louis Pasteur; the second group, Aristotle, Galen, Leonardo da Vinci, Milton, Shakespeare, John Locke, Emmanuel Kant, Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In a letter addressed to *America* (February 28), the official organ of the Jesuits in the United States, a subscriber suggests that "Dr. Eliot's list should be corrected by competent scholars." He writes: "This is a startling revelation of the narrow and partisan outlook of the renowned president emeritus of Harvard. The Americans in his list are Ralph Waldo Emerson, who did more than any one else to rob the Puritans of their faith and substituted for it nothing but some beautiful phrases; William Ellery Channing, a weak prototype of Emerson; and Horace Mann, whose chief effort was to Prussianize the American school system. The foreign names also include several of inferior rank. It is discouraging that our American universities accept as their spokesman so biased a thinker."

With this opinion the reviewer finds himself in full accord; only he would probably select ten different men than the Catholic subscriber has in mind. In naming ten of the greatest educators of the last two hundred years, a Jesuit would no doubt be as biased and narrow as Dr. Eliot.

MUELLER.

The number of drug addicts in the United States is estimated at 1,000,000, by the Commissioner of Correction for New York City, Frederic A. Wallis. While the per capita consumption is one grain in Italy, two in Germany, three in England, four in France, it is thirty-six grains in the United States, surpassing even India with a consumption of twenty-seven grains per capita. It has increased five grains per capita since 1914 spite of the Harrison Narcotic Act. The most popular opiate is heroin, five ounces of which are calculated to produce 10,000 addicts in a few days. Boys between the ages of twelve and fifteen are taught the use of narcotic drugs. Addicts pay from \$10 to \$30 a day to satisfy their craving. This is a horrid chapter in present-day social ethics in our country, and the worst feature of it is its rapid spread. (See *Current History*, February.)

DAU.

Pera Johannes, Lutheran missionary to the Kurds in Persia, died September 3, 1924, aged seventy-three years, at the home of his son in Alsace. He had suffered much during the recent persecutions in Persia. Pastor H. Stallmann mentions that he was well known in the congregations of the Saxon Free Church in Hannover, and that Rev. K. Roebbelen, of Hermannsburg, who reports his demise, speaks of Johannes as of "a faithful man, who clung with his whole heart to the Lutheran Church and regarded it as his life-task to transmit the blessing of Luther's Reformation to his native country," especially to the Old Syrian Church of Persia. DAU.

Referring to the orgy of repressive measures in which his party is indulging, Mussolini, on January 3, said in the Italian Parliament: "I declare before this Chamber, before the world, and before God that I personally assume the whole political, moral, and historical responsibility for what has occurred. I declare that if the Fascisti are an association of malefactors, then I am the head of that association of malefactors. . . . Let them [the Opposition] remember that if I had employed in inflaming Fascism a hundredth part of the energy I have employed in restraining it, then indeed there would not be one single enemy of Fascism from one end of Italy to the other." *Popolo d' Italia* remarked after this deliverance: "January 3 will be a memorable date in the history of Italian civilization. Italy, Europe, and the world now know that Fascism has become the government in order to personify the whole nation. Oppositions are a thing of the past." Always bear in mind that Mussolini is a friend of the Pope. DAU.

Glimpses from the Observer's Window. — That atheism is not encouraged at the great schools of America is the conviction of Dr. Fosdick, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *Scottish Rite Clip Service*. "Students no longer take unquestioningly what their elders have handed down to them, . . . but they are religious in the best sense of the term." All of which means just as much as you choose to take out of it. The authorities quoted are not very reassuring.

Regarding the football team of Notre Dame University, Father John F. O'Hara says: "In all the football trips this fall arrangements were made in advance for Holy Communion on every day of the trip. . . . The boys never missed." The "fifteen" of the Benedictine Abbey of Downside in England have an equally fine religious record. *The Commonweal* is filled with edification and reverence by this record. It regards it as a sign of great promise for the future of Catholicism. The sporting world should take notice that when a Catholic team plays, Catholicism plays.

The complete break of Argentina with the Vatican was prevented by the Bishop of Santa Fe's submitting for the Government's approval the documents by which the Pope had appointed him Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires. This right of approval was conceded to the Government of Argentina in return for having made Roman Catholicism the state religion under the Argentine Constitution.

Dr. Antonio Eitel, Dr. Karl Glochner, and Dr. A. Decker have been invited by the Colombian government to modernize the educational system of the republic.

At a secret consistory on December 18, 1924, the Pope, upon the return of the Pontifical Relief Mission from Russia, denounced the Moscow government and the principles of Bolshevism in unusually strong terms. He called on all heads of governments to unite to avert the grave dangers of Socialism and Communism. Time will show what this call means.

Referring to the Sterling-Reed Bill for Federal Control of Education, now pending in Congress, the Catholic *Commonwealth* (January 28), after showing the waste of money which this bill invites, remarks: "It is tyrannical to declare that no State may permit the operation of a foreign-language school within its borders. One may well suspect ulterior purposes, elsewhere plainly manifest, in this bill, which, far from aiding education, would destroy, not education only, but the liberties of the people." The writer is worried particularly about French being debarred from the curricula of private schools and says nothing about Polish, Italian, and German. Of course, the bill before Congress is tyrannical, but there are better ways of proving that than by pointing to the elimination of French, which is a negligible quantity in our ordinary private schools.

Genealogical research connects George Washington with a Scandinavian ancestry, by way of the family of Wass, which emigrated from Denmark in 970 and built the town of Wassingatun in the county of Durham, England. Washington himself claimed this descent in remarks which he made at a meeting of the Societas Scandinaviensis at Philadelphia, December 11, 1782.

The churches of Minnesota are asked to support House Bill No. 418, which aims at closing the movies, etc., on Sunday. This will not gain better attendance at evening services in Minnesota, but it will look to the masses as a piece of spite work on the part of the preachers who resent the fact that people rather go to see a show than listen to them.

The sixth Philippine Legislature failed to pass the law providing for compulsory religious education in the Philippine Islands.

The merging of the U. L. C. congregations in Virginia, which was begun in 1921, was reported completed at the recent convention at Staunton. The process affected the Southwest Virginia Synod, the Synod of Virginia, the Holston Synod, and the Virginia Conference of the Tennessee Synod.

Caroline Atwater Mason's story *The High-way* is being ridiculed by champions of Higher Criticism for its ignorance of the work of modern Biblical inquiry. Do you remember having heard some one say to you: "Ah, but you do not understand me"?

The wrangle of the World Powers at Geneva over the control of opium consumption has ended in a moral breakdown. Viscount Cecil charged the United States, on the basis of statistics, with being the largest consumer of opium and then apologized. The U. S. Representative Porter also had to listen to insinuations that his country ought first to enforce its law for the prohibition of liquor before it start any further prohibition.

While Hans Luther, the new Chancellor of the German Empire, was addressing the Reichstag, an interrupter cried to him, "Little monk, thou art started on a rough journey." *Current Opinion* (March) remarks: "It was the famous remark addressed to Martin Luther when he set forth to face the Diet of Worms. But after all, Martin Luther—however rough the journey—somehow persisted to the end. It is not a bad augury for Hans." The task of German parliamentarians working for the uplift of the *Reich* is to break the power of the Center, or Catholic Party.

In his book *Straws and Prayer-books* John Branch Cabell, the romantic artist who is bored to death with this present misfit world, holds up to the Creator a better world à la Cabell, as a sample of what the Creator might have done if He had the wit. (See review by Llewellyn Jones in the Literary Review of the *Chicago Evening Post*.) Yes, we are passing slowly into the concluding darkness.

The Soviet Living Church of Russia is reported dead by Donald Day in the *Chicago Tribune*. It was founded two years ago by Communists with the aid of the Methodist Rev. L. O. Hartmann, editor of the *Zion Herald* of Boston. Bishops Blake and Nuelsen of the Methodist Church of America were induced by Hartmann to promise \$50,000 for the support

of the Living Church, \$40,000 of which was collected in America. The Soviet government dispossessed the Orthodox Russian Church of one building after the other, but the people refused to attend the Living (Methodist) Church.

"Adultery remains, potentially at least, the most absorbing of dramatic themes because no other concrete act which a human being can perform awakens so many and such varied emotional reverberations," says Joseph Wood Krutch, dramatic critic of the *Nation* (February, 1925), in a review of the latest plays put on the New York stage. Remember this: Adultery and the modern stage are indissoluble.

Holy Year, according to the *Commonweal* (February 11), has begun with a scarcity of pilgrims; but the hope is expressed that "there will be no shortage by the end of the year."

DAU.

BOOK REVIEW.

Noonday Sermons. By J. W. Behnken. 100 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.00. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

For the past eight years noonday services, from 12.25 to 12.50, have been successfully conducted in the down-town section by our St. Louis churches, daily, Saturdays and Sundays excepted, during the entire six weeks of Lent. Pastor Alfred Doerffler calls attention to this in his preface to the new book of *Noonday Sermons*. Pastor J. W. Behnken, of Houston, Tex., has for six consecutive years been one of the preachers at these services. Upon repeated requests his addresses are now published in book form. In these addresses the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion are treated, such as the inspiration of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ, the vicarious atonement, justification, Christ's resurrection, etc. Pastor Behnken is known as a preacher who presents the subject-matter of the Bible in clear, simple language, and in such a manner that the hearer cannot fail to know the important truth which is confessed. We believe that not only many pastors, but also many laymen will be glad to buy and read Pastor Behnken's *Noonday Sermons*. — Since the St. Louis churches eight years ago began the holding of noonday services during Lent, an increasing number of our churches in various cities has been doing likewise. Until now, however, the St. Louis churches are the only ones which hold these services during the entire period of Lent. FRITZ.

Synodical Reports: *North Dakota and Montana District.* Tenth report. 28 pages; 15 cts. — *Central Illinois District.* Eleventh report. 71 pages; 34 cts. — *Iowa District.* Thirtieth report. 116 pages; 55 cts. — *Minnesota District.* Twenty-ninth report. 70 pages; 34 cts. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

The first of these reports contains only the thesis of the doctrinal paper on "Free Will, or Human Powers," in accordance with Article II of the Formula of Concord. — The second report contains an English doctrinal paper by the Rev. C. A. Weiss on "The Lord's Supper" and a German doctrinal paper by Prof. F. Wenger on "Confession." — The report of the Iowa District contains two doctrinal essays, one (German) on "Violations of the Doctrine Concerning the Ministerial Call," by Pastor Th. Stephan, and an-

other (English) on "The Bible — the Word of God," by Pastor A. H. Semmann. — The report of the Minnesota District contains a German doctrinal essay on "Soul-destroying Aberrations of Our Time in Reference to the Doctrine of Christ, Our Savior" (continued), by Pastor A. Kuntz.

FRITZ.

The Living Christ. A Book of Sermons by *T. E. Schmauk, D. D., LL. D.* 215 pages. (United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia.)

The 24 sermons in this book were compiled and edited by A. Chas. R. Keiter, pastor of Salem Church, Lebanon, Pa., where many of the sermons were preached. The editor has condensed some of the sermons, which were exceedingly lengthy, and elaborated, with considerable freedom, others which were rather incomplete. Some of these sermons were known to the public, at least by report and in excerpts, *viz.*, the sermons preached at the biennial conventions of the General Council from 1909 to 1917. These sermons are in a class by themselves. There are five of them, from the following texts: Luke 10, 23—37: "The Eye that Sees, and the Love that Loves"; 1 Cor. 12, 27: "The Living Body"; John 14, 6: "The Way, the Truth, and the Life"; Luke 18, 31; 19, 10. 41—43. 45—47: "The Lord and His Church"; Isaiah, chaps. 33 and 35: "Our Crisis and Our Conqueror." The following sermons were prepared for special Sundays or occasions: a confirmation sermon, from John 19, 14, on the subject "Our King"; a sermon for Quinquagesima Sunday, from Luke 18, 31, on "The Great Commoner"; a sermon from John 2, 1. 2, for the Second Sunday after Epiphany, on "A Social Arbiter"; a sermon for the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, from Col. 3, 3, on "Hidden with Christ"; a sermon for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity, from Matt. 22, 34—36, on "The Wrong Way and the Right Way"; a sermon for the consecration of a church, from 1 Cor. 13, 13, on "The Three Pillars"; and an Epiphany missionary sermon, from Hab. 2, 14, on "The Triumph of the Gospel." The twelve sermons remaining treat the following texts and themes: Ps. 51, 10: "Who Is This?" John 6, 27: "The Sealed of God"; Is. 32, 2: "The Man from Heaven"; Rev. 21, 5: "Who Maketh All Things New"; 2 Cor. 5, 20: "A Heavenly Ambassador"; John 6, 68: "There Is no Substitute"; John 18, 38: "Why the Skeptic?" Matt. 15, 23: "The Silences of God"; Matt. 8, 29: "What Have We to Do with Thee?" Mark 14, 3: "The Alabaster Box"; Acts 3, 19: "The Conversion of a Soul"; and 1 Cor. 16, 13: "The Secret of Strength." The earmarks of the ordinary homiletic rules for sermon-building are conspicuously absent from only some of these sermons, the progression of thought being indicated by simple numeration. The majority of the sermons plainly exhibit the author's division, and in some they are recapitulated in the exordium. There is a vigorous advance in the development of the central thought. The spice and tang of scholarship is much in evidence. The editor numbers Dr. Schmauk with the greatest pulpit orators of his day and says that "his utterances ever stirred and edified the souls of those who heard him." This may well be so; for even in these printed sermons one feels the grip of strong thinking. Moreover, Dr. Schmauk seems to have had the good sense of adapting himself to particular audiences. I do not believe that every sermon in this collection could have been preached everywhere. Quite a number of these sermons could be taken apart and built into several sermons. For instance, the

very first sermon in the collection, which was preached at the convention of the General Council at Toledo, in 1913, contains material for a series of sermons. It would even gain by such treatment; for in places the thought is rather abstruse, and the generalizations in the opening paragraph are so sweeping that one wonders how the preacher is going to make his audience see all that was in his mind. The author's skill and power of illustration is exhibited very strikingly in the sermon on conversion. Just in this sermon, however, the critical point of this soteriological act, the acceptance of Jesus and His atoning sacrifice, should have been made more prominent. That is what blots out sin in the individual, because it has blotted out all sins of all men. DAU.

Introduction to the Epistles and Gospels of the Church-Year. By *Henry Offermann*. 142 pages. \$1.00, postpaid. (United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia.)

To the reviewer this book is, first of all, a study in suggestion, its method, its power, and its responsibility. The subject to which it is here applied promptly arrests the attention of every preacher who has to deliver a sermon on the old pericopes. There is a word here on every one of them, both the Epistles and the Gospels of the Sundays and the principal festivals of the church-year. To give the reader an idea of what the author aims to do, here is his "introduction" to the Epistle and the Gospel for Easter Sunday: "*Epistle: 1 Cor. 5, 6—8*. Paul is writing in a rather severe tone. And he had reasons for it. The Christians in Corinth boasted of their superior knowledge. But there were serious defects in the church, even with regard to the moral life. The fifth chapter of First Corinthians deals with a flagrant case of immorality, to which the church was wholly indifferent. Paul calls upon the Corinthians as a church to take action with regard to that case. He wrote his letter in Ephesus, and he expects that the letter will be delivered to the Corinthians about the time of the Jewish Passover. The references of the apostle to the Jewish Passover are responsible for the selection of this lesson. If the lesson is used as text for an Easter sermon, the emphasis must be laid upon verses 7 and 8, in which the statement is made that 'our Passover also has been sacrificed, even Christ.' This theme will justify the division: Therefore let us keep the feast (a) in Easter joy, (b) in Easter service (with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth). — *Gospel: Mark 16, 1—8*. Each of the great festivals of the church-year has its own message. Easter is the royal festival; it is 'the day of the Lord' in a special sense. And therefore it has a message that is fundamental. This message is expressed in the words: 'Christ is risen.' Whatever text may be chosen, the resurrection of our Lord must be the center and heart of the sermon. There are reasons to believe that our Easter Gospel is the oldest account of the Lord's resurrection. It is therefore a most appropriate text, and it is written in that simple, but charming style which characterizes the story of Jesus in the Gospel of St. Mark. Mark's story of our Lord's resurrection may be divided into two parts. Verses 1—4 picture to us the faithful women on their way to the sepulcher: their undying love for the Lord; the sadness of their hearts; their anxiety about the stone. Verses 5—8 have their center in the message of the angel: 'Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen.' Here we have the Easter-message, which must be made promi-

ment in the sermon. The significance of this message can be explained if the story of our Gospel is used to show: (a) What we would miss if Christ had not risen: His death would be the end of His life; He would not be our Savior; we would have no hope; (b) what the Easter-message really means: Christ lives; He is our Savior; our faith in Him rests upon a sure foundation; we can serve Him in newness of life."

In this manner the Epistles and Gospels for sixty-seven Sundays and festival days are treated. The author's method, then, is: "A word to the wise," etc. His intention has been "to build a bridge that leads from the text to the sermon; but it was not his aim to build a . . . *pons asinorum*." Every user of his book will enjoy the implied compliment. Rightly the author holds: "The study of commentaries is far less important than the study of Scripture itself. And unless the student learns for himself, by constant study, meditation, and prayer, to search the Scriptures and to walk and move with perfect freedom in this beautiful garden of God, commentaries will be of little service to him; they will be crutches rather than guides. The best help in the interpretation of a Scripture-lesson, it seems to the writer, is an introduction that will lead the student into the heart of his text and will show him how to apply the matter of his text to himself and to others. That is substantially what Bengel meant by his advice to the student of the New Testament: '*Te totum applica ad textum; rem totam applica ad te.*' It also expresses the writer's first aim in publishing this little book."

As regards homiletical commentaries which offer practical suggestions, the author says, again correctly: "There is very often no real inner connection between the exegesis of the text and those practical suggestions." Nevertheless, exegetical study must remain what it always has been in the true Christian Church: an essential and fundamental exercise of the preacher. The author says: "Homiletics, the theory of preaching, teaches him how to build his sermon. But the very first requirement is a thorough study of the text itself. It is one of the weaknesses of the modern sermon that the text is too often used only as a motto or as a starting-point for all sorts of rhetorical flights. Consequently, much of our preaching to-day lacks positiveness; it lacks that note of certainty which enables the preacher to say with regard to his sermon: *Haec dixit Dominus*. A sermon may be brilliant and thoughtful; it may fairly bristle with quotations from modern writers; but unless it sets forth in clear language the message which the text conveys to the readers, it falls short of its mark. The congregation is always at the mercy of the preacher: it may be stimulated to momentary thought and action; but it will not be built up in a faith that is deeply rooted in the Scriptures. The result is that not a few of our people fall easy victims to all sorts of modern heresies, while many others are utterly helpless in the face of modern false prophets with their claims to Scriptural teachings. It is well and good to point out in books and pamphlets the errors of modern religious movements. But something more is needed: our entire preaching must be more Biblical, more evangelical. In other words, what we would advocate is more expository preaching. The writer's own experience has taught him that a congregation is always attentive and appreciative if the sermon endeavors to bring out the pure gold of the text."

The power of suggestion is wonderful. Plant a live seed-thought suc-

cessfully in a fertile mind, and you set the person's intellect, will, and affections to work. Any sermonic product thus achieved gives to the author the satisfaction that it is his own work. He enjoys it, and his audience likewise enjoys it, as somehow they get the impression that what they are listening to is coming to them straight from their preacher's heart. The suggestion which the preacher received is transmitted to hundreds of others and continues germinating. That, however, shows the responsibility which the suggester assumes. If he is not a God-fearing man, filled with reverence for the Word of the Lord, he can work untold ruin. Our author is a conscientious man, and what he offers is good, even though one may dissent from his special exegesis or his view of the particular scope of the text which he treats. DAV.

Our Church. An Official Study Book. The first of a series of "Key Books" to the origin, principles, and activities of the Church, prepared under the general editorship of the *Rev. F. H. Knubel, D. D., LL. D.*, and the *Rev. M. G. G. Scherer, D. D.* 170 pages. (United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia.)

What this book endeavors to do for the people whom the United Lutheran Church reaches is something that every one of the large Lutheran bodies of our country, I think, will be compelled to do: offering in a handy, attractive form brief, readable accounts, crammed full of facts, of the principal events in the body's past history, a clear statement of its doctrinal basis and church polity, and an exhibit of its activities, methods of work, and finances. The avowed purpose of the authors of the present volume, the precursor of others that are to follow, has been to "stimulate our people to further study of the Church's life and activity and to fuller consecration of themselves and of their means to the service of Christ." It is one of the sanest pieces of intelligent and dignified propaganda work that has come to my notice recently. The chapter headings of the book are: 1. How It (the present United Lutheran Church) Came to Be; 2. How It Governs Itself; 3. What It Stands For; 4. How It is Organized for Its Work; 5. What Its Work Is; 6. How Its Work is Done; 7. The Sources of Its Efficiency; Constitution; List of Boards and Elective Committees. At the end of each chapter there is offered a brief questionnaire by which the reader is enabled to test himself and see whether he has mastered the contents of the chapter.—The book is written from a Merger viewpoint and for the further realization of Merger ideals. Not all its judgments will meet with universal approval; *e. g.*, it is necessary to qualify "the beneficent influence" which the organization of the General Synod had "on the history and development of the Lutheran Church in America." Nor is the disruption which occurred in the General Synod in 1866 greatly to be deplored: it was one of the best things that could have happened to it, although the necessity for it was sad enough, and the scope of the movement then begun leaves some things to be desired as regards true union in the Lutheran Church of America.—I confess to a surprise in noting the statement that the start of the present Merger was given by laymen.—In the chapter on the self-government of the Church there is a lack of clearness: the ministry which the Christ about to ascend in His farewell discourse commits to the disciples seems to be forthwith identified with the work of the called minister of the Gospel, which I do not think was

the intention. Overgreat brevity? — The view that “a synod is simply an expansion of the congregational idea, . . . so that whatever authority pertains to a congregation in a narrower, pertains to a synod in a wider, sense,” I cannot endorse. Ultimately this view must produce a super-church with power, delegated indeed, but nevertheless sovereign power over the various congregations equal to that of the individual congregation over its own members. I should never accord the Missouri Synod any such power over myself or my congregation if I were a pastor. — The suggestion that constitutions for congregations should be made very brief I consider very good. The fewer regulations and the more reliance placed on ordinary Christian intelligence, the better the efficiency of the congregation. It is easy to lay down rules, but it is a far greater and, in the long run, a far more effective measure to raise the intelligence and rouse and direct the intelligent zeal of the members of the congregation on any issue that may arise. — The contents of the book are so various and so interesting that one is at a loss where to stop in calling attention to particular features. I could wish that both the President of our General Body and the presidents of our Districts, as well as the directors and managers of our larger synodical affairs could look into the contents of this book.

DAU.

The Coming of the Cross. An Epic of the North. By *George Swenson*. 107 pages.

The Book of Amos. Notes by *O. J. Soedergren*. 101 pages.

In the Hands of Bandits and Yet in the Hands of God. By *Anton Lundeen*. Illustrated. 144 pages. (Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill.)

How the Vikings and their people were made Christians is told by a gifted poet in the first publication. The academy may condemn the author for discarding the heroic meter for his epic and varying his meter with nearly every canto, but his readers will thank him for it, and we trust there will be many, for his book makes delightful reading. — Soedergren's study of Amos is just what the Bible student who does not work with the Hebrew original would desire. It is a marvel in comprehensiveness and condensation, clear, plain, and pointed. It is written in a reverent spirit and in its brief explanatory notes emphasizes with fine practical piety the doctrinal value of the prophet's statements. The study was presented to a class of a summer school, The Lutheran Bible Institute at Lake Independence, Maple Plain, Minn., in 1923. An exquisite method for spending a brief summer vacation! — Lundeen's little treatise is a contribution to Lutheran martyrology in pagan lands. It takes the reader into the political disturbances which are agitating China just now. The story of what the Lutheran missionaries of the Augustana Synod at Juchow, Honan, who were carried off by brigands, had to undergo is very well told.

DAU.

Harvest Thanksgiving Sermons. By Some Leading Preachers. 189 pp., 5¼ × 7¾. \$1.60, net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

This volume is a contribution to sermon literature on a subject with regard to which sermonic material is still rather scarce. The book contains twelve harvest thanksgiving sermons contributed by leading divines

of England and Scotland, such as Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham; Canon Carnegie, Subdean of Westminster Abbey; Dr. Hutton of Westminster Chapel, etc. The addresses are carefully elaborated and are composed in simple, but choice language. The tenor and tone is solemn and earnest. In most of them, however, we miss the proper attention to the greatest of all divine blessings, the Word of God, compared with which all temporal gifts are insignificant. Also faith, as the source of all true Christian thankfulness, is not sufficiently emphasized. The sermons were written for audiences different from those which Lutheran pastors face on Thanksgiving Day; nevertheless they may serve even them as a fruitful source of inspiration. Some of the subjects are: Not by Bread Alone; The Witness to God in the Gifts of Nature; Daily Bread; The Challenge of the Harvest; God's Disapproval of a Grudging Spirit. MUELLER.

The Christ of the Bible. By Rev. R. A. Torrey, D. D. 285 pp., $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.50, net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

Dr. Torrey is a staunch Fundamentalist and has written a number of books in defense of the basic evangelical truths. This book is his latest contribution, and there is much in it to recommend it to the Christian public. Dr. Torrey is manifestly sincere in his belief and frankly outspoken in his criticism of modern unbelievers — Liberalists, Russellites, Christian Scientists, Seventh-day Adventists, Mormons, etc., who deny the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ, and the vicarious atonement. However, even so this book requires careful reading. The errors of Calvinism concerning the *unio personalis*, the *communio naturarum*, and the *communicatio idiomatum* are all represented and restated in the chapters before us. These errors account for the lack of distinctness in all doctrines that pertain to the Savior's person — His incarnation, resurrection, ascension, etc. Moreover, Dr. Torrey is a subordinationist. He says: "To sum up all, we have seen in this chapter concerning the Christ presented to us in the Bible: Jesus Christ is, and eternally shall be, subordinate to God the Father." (p. 53.) Then, too, the author is a millennialist. The book contains such sentences as the following: "The appalling atrocities of the Kaiser and his hordes in Belgium, in the most awful days of the last war, will be nothing to what shall come upon this earth when the devil's own Kaiser takes the reins of government." MUELLER.

Life on the Uplands. An Interpretation of the Twenty-third Psalm. By John D. Freeman. 172 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.50, net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

The first edition of this book was published in 1907/08, when it met with an enthusiastic reception in Great Britain and the United States. Since then it was allowed to go out of print, and by special request it has been issued in a revised and extended form. The book treats the Twenty-third Psalm in ten short chapters, which bear the following titles: A Life in a Love; The Morning Meal on the Meadows; The Midday Drink from the Well; The Noontide Rest in the Shade; Guidance along the Midway Spaces; Adventures in the Shadowed Glen; The Banquet on the Darkening World; Twilight at the Sheepfold Door; Night within the Gates; Foregleams of the Heavenly Dawn. This arrangement according to the

"time-notes," which the author thinks are suggested by the various verses of the psalm, appears to us as rather artificial. By way of criticism we may also say that much of what the author writes is hazy and indistinct, and what is worse, he has failed to penetrate into the depths of the psalmist's devotional song. There is something in this psalm which Dr. Freeman has not experienced himself. Is it the faith which prompted David to write it?

MUELLER.

Sermons on New Testament Characters. By *Rev. Clovis G. Chappell*, D. D. 189 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.60, net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

This is the third volume of sermons on Biblical characters published by Rev. Chappell, who is now pastor of the First Methodist Church of Memphis, Tenn. His first two volumes were well received, and also this volume deserves careful study by pastors who desire special sermon material for Sunday evening services or subjects for addresses to societies within the congregation. Some of the subjects treated in this book are: The Largest Giver—the Poor Widow; The Beloved Physician—Luke; A Beautiful Work—Mary of Bethany; The Drudge—The Elder Son; The Dying Fire—Timothy; The Business Woman—Lydia; The Making of a Minister—Paul, etc. In all, sixteen sermon addresses, varying greatly in value, are offered to the reader. The addresses are popular and practical, and in general they set forth lessons of importance to present-day Christians. Occasionally, however, the author lowers the dignity of his subject by lapsing into very bad slang, both in thought and expression. He evidently misunderstood the imprisoned Baptist when he sent his disciples to Jesus with the question: "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" This, of course, spoils the whole sermon. The Arminian views of the author appear in various places.

MUELLER.

The Significance of the Cross. By *Rev. George H. Morrison*, D. D. 72 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. 85 cts., net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

Dr. Morrison, in this little book of seventy-two pages, offers to the reader his notes for three of his weekly evening addresses which he is in the habit of delivering preparatory to the worship and service of the winter. These notes were taken during his summer vacation and show, briefly, but convincingly, the true meaning of the Cross of Christ. This is expounded under three heads: The Significance of the Cross for Jesus, The Significance of the Cross for God, and The Significance of the Cross for Man. It is refreshing to read this striking testimony in behalf of the *satisfactio vicaria*. The author summarizes this testimony as follows: "The Cross removes the barrier between man and God; it solves the problem created by our sin; it tells of a reconciliation made and perfected through which we can draw nigh to God; it tells us that our debt is paid: 'Jesus paid it all.' And the Gospel-news is that all this is done because Christ died in our room and stead upon the tree. It is a magnificent Gospel for a sinful world, worth preaching, worthy of high heaven." We regret that the author does not stress the *obedientia activa*.

MUELLER.

Sermons on Books of the Bible. By *William Wistar Hamilton, Ph. D., D. D.* 300 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Cloth, \$1.75, net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

The idea underlying these sermons is excellent. In sermons not too lengthy the author points out the main lessons of each book of the Old Testament Bible, following closely the chapters and their contents. The sermons are linked together under the general concept of God's family. Thus the main topic of Genesis is: God's desire for a family; of Exodus: The progress of the family; of Leviticus: The Father's ideals for the family; of Numbers: The family at school in the wilderness; of Deuteronomy: Review of the family history; of Joshua: Possessing the family possessions; of Judges: Making the religion of the family safe, etc. To illustrate the writer's method, the following outline of 1 Kings may serve. General subject: The Sins of Royalty against the Family. I. Treachery was always at hand. II. Ostentation was the respectable sin. III. Ungodliness and impiety recurred. IV. Apostasy begat a brood of evils. V. Heedless presumption held sway. Part I is divided into the following heads: 1. Treachery is seen at the death of David. 2. It is seen in the perfidy of Adonijah. 3. It is seen in the treachery of Joab. The writer is a Baptist preacher, and the sermons contained in this book were originally delivered to large audiences at the morning services, after a similar experiment had been made successfully with the books of the New Testament. In the Foreword the writer says: "The author's hope is that they [these sermons] may help satisfy the hunger which every Christian has for a more intimate knowledge of the Bible. . . . We long to be admitted occasionally at least into the Holy of Holies of the Word of God and there see our Master face to face and there feel and know what language cannot express of the glory of God. May the Holy Spirit so use this volume as to light the way to the Holy of Holies!" The earnest endeavor of the writer to state clearly the contents of each book of the Scriptures is manifest, and we do not hesitate to recommend his idea to our fellow-pastors.

MUELLER.

The Supernatural Jesus. By *Rev. George W. McDaniel, D. D., LL. D.* 206 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Cloth, \$1.75, net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

The purpose of this book, as stated in the Introduction, is "to discuss the evidence in the hope of leading inquiring minds to truth, unsettled minds to certainty, and believing minds to a fuller appreciation of the supernatural Jesus." In accord with this plan the author presents a clear and convincing vindication of the fundamental Christian truths against the attacks of unbelieving critics. Of the present-day Liberalists he says: "The denying school is called 'Modernists' by accommodation. They are not modern in the sense that they represent anything new. Long ago Renan expressed their views more attractively, Strauss more forcefully, Socinus more logically, Arius more subtly, and Celsus more originally." The first five chapters treat "The Supernatural Jesus" according to the four evangelists and St. Paul; the remaining five, "The Virgin Birth," "The Resurrection of Jesus," "The Deity of Christ," "The Mistakes of the Modernists," and "The Truth about the Bible and Science." The style is

popular and the presentation of the subject, lucid. Lutheran readers cannot subscribe to every statement made in the book. The author does not uphold the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible, but says: "The Christian holds that God revealed truth in the Bible." (p. 89.) Of Gen. 1, 1 he writes: "No definite time is fixed, whether six thousand years or six million years. The time is expressly indefinite and gives a place for all that geology may discover." (p. 191.) As a Baptist he does not appreciate the supreme value of the Gospel as the means of grace by which the Holy Ghost performs His regenerating and sanctifying work. Other *naevi* of a similar nature mar the pleasure of reading this book, in which, however, there is much that is good and profitable for practical use.

MUELLER.

The Person of Christ. His Perfect Humanity a Proof of His Divinity. By *Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D.* With Foreword by *Rev. Cortland Myers, D.D.* 148 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Cloth, \$1.25, net. (George H. Doran Company, New York.)

This is a revised and somewhat abbreviated edition of the work of Dr. Philip Schaff, which appeared for the first time in 1865 and again in 1883. With the consent of Prof. D. S. Schaff, of the Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pa., the American Tract Society has now republished it with such minor changes as were deemed helpful to the reader. Some of the testimonies have been omitted, and the critical notes that were retained have been transferred from the end of the volume to the pages where they belong. In addition to the Foreword, Preface, and the Appendix of Impartial Testimonies (in which are quoted the opinions of men like Carlyle, Channing, Strauss, Theodore Parker, Mill, Renan, etc.), the book contains fifteen chapters which constitute a forceful apologetic of Christ's divinity. The basis of argument is that Christ's perfect humanity is a convincing proof of His divinity. In other words, the purity of Christ's life and the high dignity of His teachings substantiate His claim of being God's Son, the promised Savior of the world. Perhaps the most profitable chapter is chapter XIV, in which the author confutes the false theories concerning Christ advanced by Deists and Rationalists of the last century. While not altogether free from error, this scholarly work of Dr. Schaff certainly deserves a place in the pastor's study.

MUELLER.

Over the Hills of Galilee. By *Stephen A. Haboush.* 91 pages, 4×6 . Cloth, 60 cts.; dozen, \$6.00, postpaid. (Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O.)

This little book is divided into two parts, the first telling the experiences of Stephen A. Haboush (a Syrian convert to Christianity) as "shepherd boy of Galilee," while the second applies these experiences in the interpretation of Ps. 23. Sometimes the interpretation departs from the traditional views of Christian scholars, as, for instance in v. 5, where the words: "Thou anointest my head with oil" are made to refer to the healing of wounds by means of olive oil. No new light is shed on the beautiful psalm, and frequently the reader is irritated by unworthy ideas and undignified expressions. The price is rather high. MUELLER.

Das Evangelium des Johannes. Nach dem Urtext uebersetzt und erlaeutert von *Dr. Curt Boettger*. — **Der Weg zu Gott. Das Wissen von Gott.** Von *Georg Casper*, frueher Priester der katholischen Kirche. — **Von der Seele und von der Abgeschiedenheit.** Von *Meister Eckehart*. Nach der mittelhochdeutschen Urschrift bearbeitet und mit Anmerkungen versehen von *Dr. Arthur Liebernickel*. (Johannes Baum Verlag, Pfullingen in Wuerttemberg.)

Germany, the home of the Reformation, is now being overrun by all manner of sects and cults and has become the *rendezvous* of fanatics, heretics, and fakers. The above publications prove that also Yogi philosophy and Hindu theosophy are seeking converts among the descendants of those to whom Dr. Luther preached the Gospel in its purity. They announce to all "*Seelisch-Suchende und Geistig-Strebende*" a new "*philosophia occulta*" by which to find true peace with God, together with mental, moral, and physical rejuvenation. Of the three pamphlets Meister Eckehart's *Von der Seele* is the least offensive. Meister Eckehart was a Dominican monk, whose pantheistic mysticism was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church. Casper's *Weg zu Gott* is an introduction to Yogi fanaticism as represented mainly by Bô Yin Râ, while *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, by Dr. Boettger, written in the same spirit and for the same purpose, is so vile a blasphemy of the Gospel that one shudders as he reads. The three publications appear under the general title of *Evangelien der Seele*, and the theosophy which they teach is known as the *Neugeist-Lehre*. We pity all who seek God after the manner of the *Neugeist-Lehrer*!

MUELLER.

Brief Mention.

The First St. Paul's Church of Pittsburgh (South Side) celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary, and its pastor, *Rev. E. F. Brand*, has commemorated the event by an illustrated brochure **Kurzes aus der Geschichte der Ersten Deutschen Ev.-Luth. Gemeinde zu East Birmingham, Penna.** — Kountze Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church of Omaha, Nebr., sends us its artistic folder for Lent, 1925. — From Immanuel Ev. Luth. Church, Michigan City, Ind. (Rev. G. M. Krach, pastor), has come the mimeographed parish-paper with printed cover, **The Friendly Visitor**, also the parish-paper **Immanuel**, and the **Walther League Appeal**, authorized by the Central District of the Missouri Synod for the Improvement Fund of the Indianapolis Lutheran Orphanage. — From the authorities at New York has come the announcement and prospectus of the **John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation**, which aims at an extension of the Rhodes Scholarship system so as to embrace more aged applicants, also professors on furlough for their sabbatical year. — From the Augustana Book Concern at Rock Island the following publications have come: **The Victorious Church**, a sacred pageant by *Hulda Kreutz*; **Two Thousand Years of Christianity**, a sacred pageant by *Mildred Waldes* and *Eskil C. Carlson*; **Easter Dawn**, an Easter service for the Sunday-school, arranged by *Rev. A. I. Hamilton*. — A pretty poster in colors announces the Thirty-third International Convention of the Walther League, which will be held July 26—30 at San Francisco.

DAU.